NME

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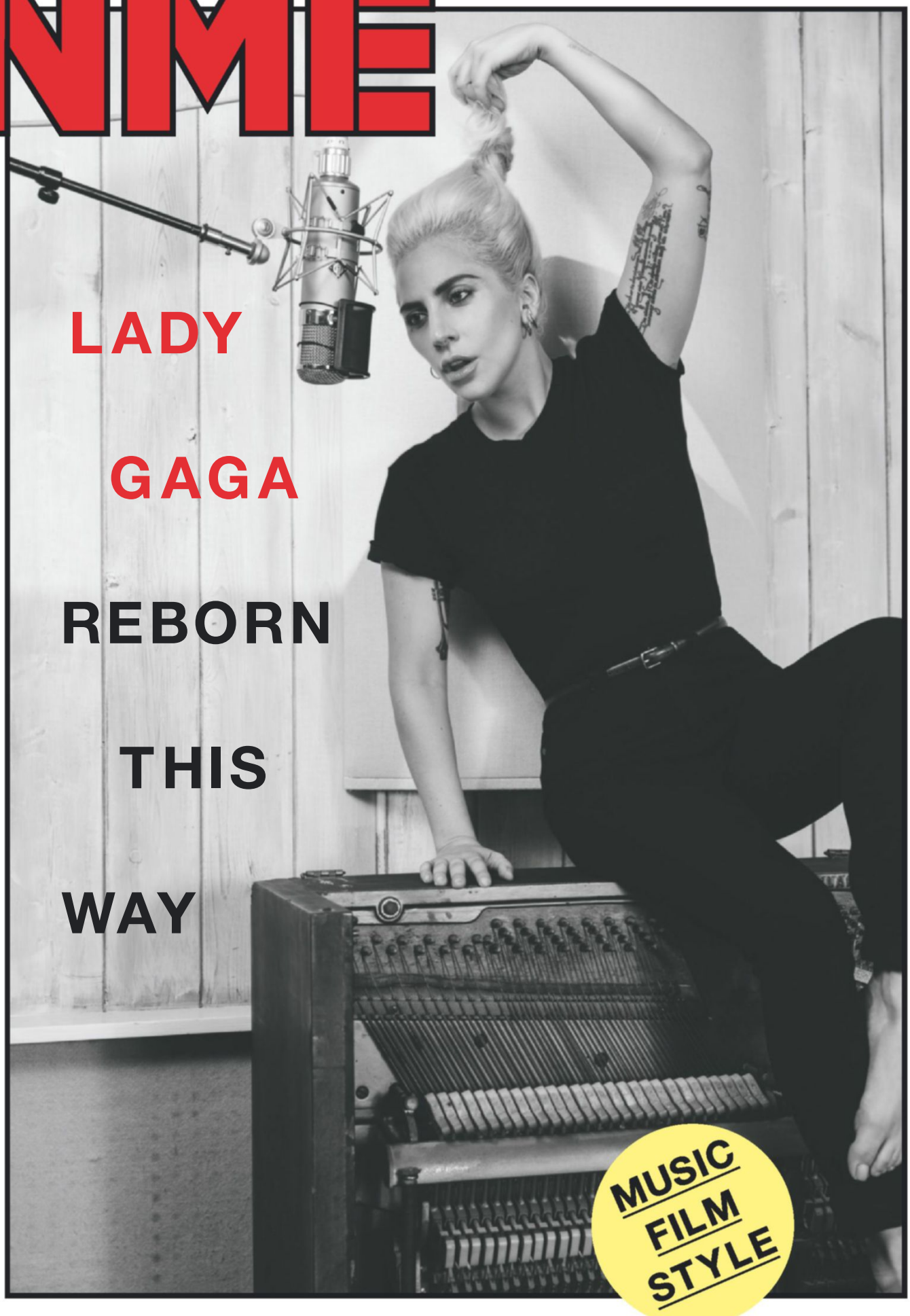
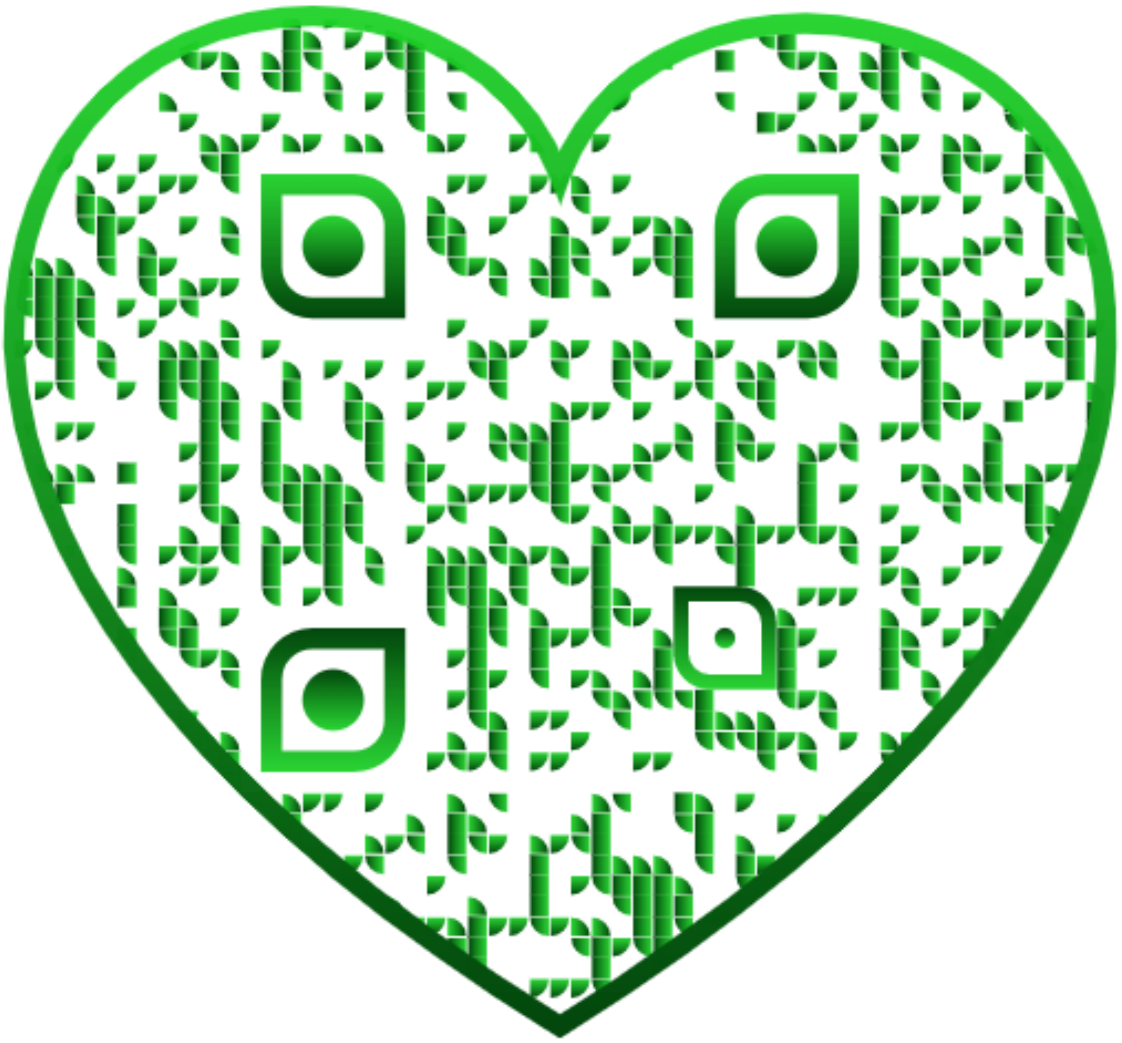


LADY GAGA

REBORN THIS WAY

MUSIC
FILM
STYLE



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NME

HELLO...

You can find inspiration in all kinds of places. Paul McCartney, for example, climbs into small cupboards or locks himself in the bog to write songs. This week's cover star, Lady Gaga, channelled the spirit of her long-dead aunt Joanne for her latest album. And last week, 400 of you found your inspiration in a beaten-up old industrial building in Islington for *NME's* first ever #lifehacks event.

If you didn't make it, you can watch videos from the day on the *NME* website. If you did, then I hope the words of wisdom from our speakers and panellist have stirred something inside you, because they definitely did in me. In this week's issue you can see what advice our secret special guest, Tinie Tempah, had to give, and next week it's over to the truly inspiring Jamal Edwards, who you definitely shouldn't miss.

Until then, enjoy our massive Gaga comeback interview, keep checking NME.com for news and great new music, be nice to each other, keep an open mind and remember that p***ks like Boris Johnson and Donald Trump are dangerous, not funny. Enjoy!

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor-in-Chief
@itsmikelike

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"Who I really and truly am is a little girl who loved to play piano"

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Bow down and worship the potent hip-hop duo that is Riz MC and Heems

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Nu-metal is, somehow, back. One of the scene's biggest bands explain why

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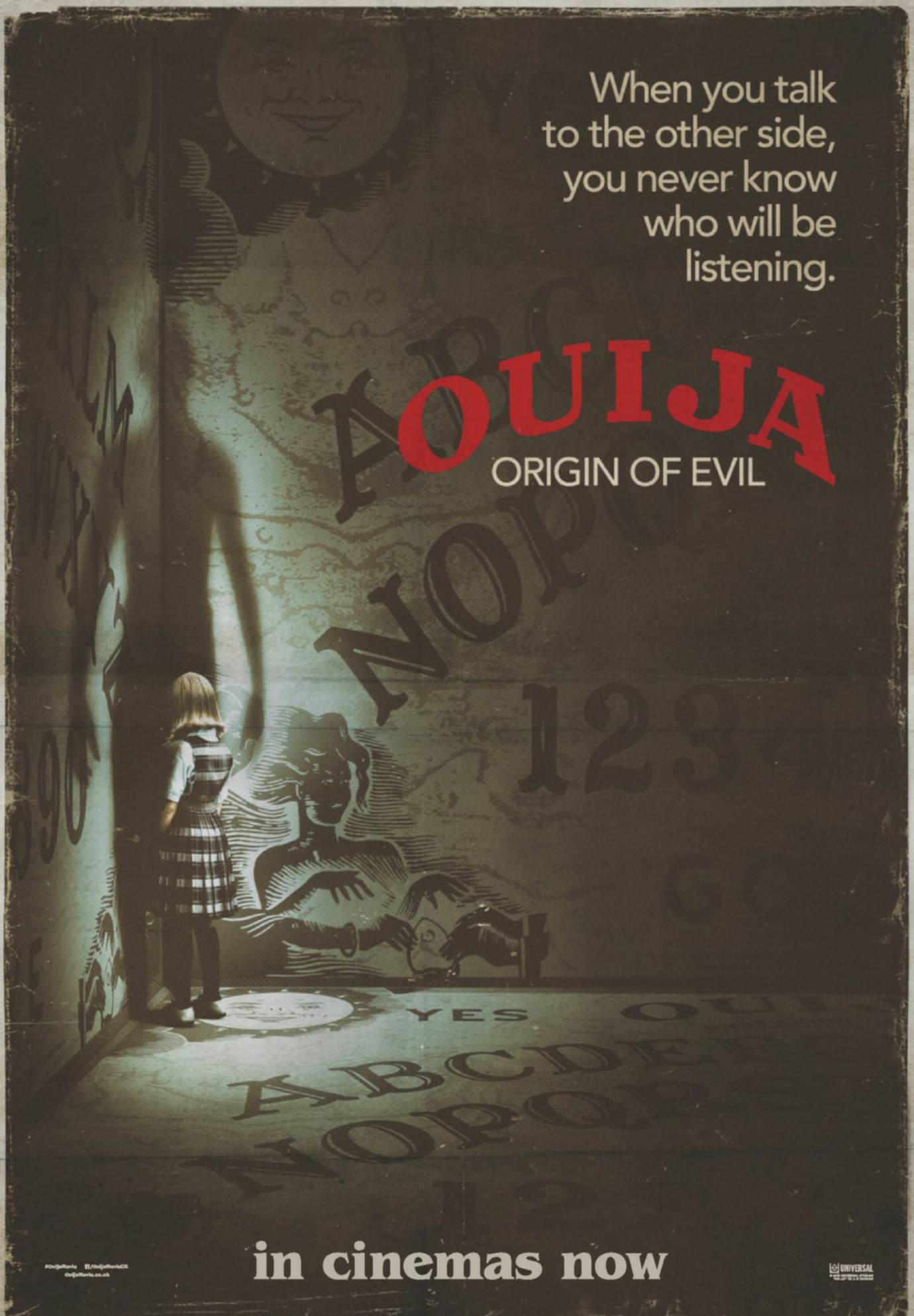
When you talk to the other side, you never know who will be listening.
OUIJA
ORIGIN OF EVIL
YES
in cinemas now
UNIVERSAL

AGENDA

WHAT EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THIS WEEK

Hello strangers

Three new characters have been announced for series two of *Stranger Things*

The old gang's getting some new blood

BILLY

Max's "very muscular and hyper-confident" brother Billy, who reportedly drives a Camaro. According to *Entertainment Weekly*, he's "a classic girlfriend-stealing bad boy".
PLAYED BY: Australian actor Dacre Montgomery. Plays the Red Ranger in the upcoming *Power Rangers* film.

MAX

A teenage girl who, according to TV website TVLine, is "tough and confident", rides a skateboard, and whose "appearance, behaviour and pursuits seem more typical of boys than of girls in this era". Is she the inspiration behind second season episode 'MadMax'? Seems likely.
PLAYED BY: Sadie Sink, who starred in another Netflix show: *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*.

ROMAN

A 30-ish-year-old gender-neutral character who, according to TVLine, is seeking revenge for a childhood loss.
PLAYED BY: Hasn't been decided yet.

Wanna be in *Stranger Things*: season two?

Here's what production company Taylormade is looking for...

- "1980s-looking people"
- "Especially males with longer hair and females willing to cut their bangs"
- People of "all ethnicities"
- People who live near Atlanta, Georgia
- Is this you? Apply here: backstage.com/casting Good luck!

FOR MORE *STRANGER THINGS*, GO TO NME.COM

WORDS: HELEN THOMAS. PHOTOS: NETFLIX

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SOUTH WEST TRAINS
On board with you

Tinie Tempah at #LifeHacks on October 13

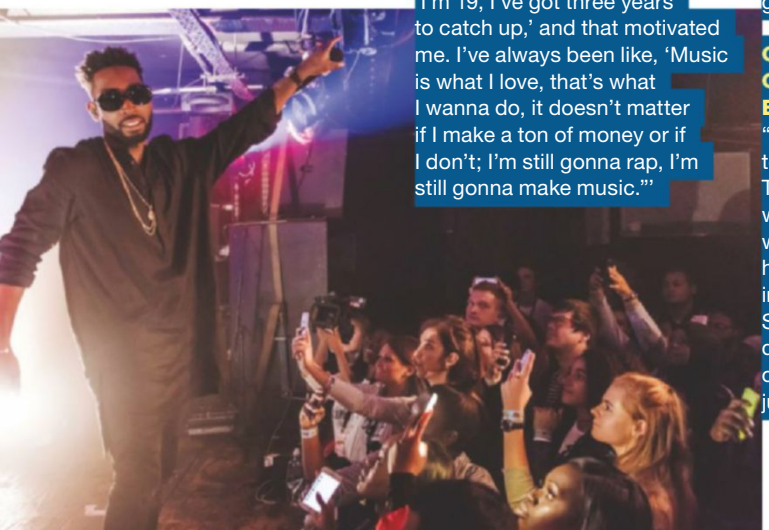
INTERVIEW: JORDAN BASSETT. PHOTOS: ANDY HUGHES, GETTY IMAGES, REX FEATURES

Tinie talk

Words of wisdom from UK rap superstar Tinie Tempah

LAST WEEK SAW THE first ever *NME* #LifeHacks event, where people like SBTV's Jamal Edwards came along and dished out invaluable life advice. One of the biggest names in UK rap, Tinie Tempah, headlined the event. After his show, he shared some of his own hard-earned wisdom…

ON STICKING AT IT…
"I've been doing this since I was 14. The first thing I put out that people will know was 'Wifey Riddim', when I was 16. I'm 27 now, so there were years of hard grind. It's easier to remember grind than success because it happened for longer. The thing that made me want to carry on was seeing other people who were successful – when I was young I'd see a successful 25 or 26 or 30-year-old and I'd be like, 'I'm 19, I've got three years to catch up,' and that motivated me. I've always been like, 'Music is what I love, that's what I wanna do, it doesn't matter if I make a ton of money or if I don't; I'm still gonna rap, I'm still gonna make music."'



ON BECOMING A ROLE MODEL…
"I've got three younger siblings, so having to be a good role model for my little brothers and sisters, it was quite important for me to do something proper with myself. I took a gap year, which turned into three years, and I got a lot of stick from my parents – like, 'Your little brothers and sisters are just watching you wake up and do nothing, and it's not cool.' It's important to go through some sort of struggle in life. It makes you more appreciative."

ON CHOOSING YOUR INNER CIRCLE WISELY…
"I keep people around who can enlighten me and show me things I didn't know. That's something I've consciously decided to do. So everyone from my manager, who's my older cousin, to my mum and my sister, who I work with, to one of my cousins, who I work with, to all my friends I grew up with – all those people gave me advice in some way."

ON THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE HE COULD EVER GIVE…
"The main thing I've stuck to is, 'Don't complain in life.' There's always people in worse-off situations in the world who would die to be here right now, watching this in a comfortable environment. So whatever card you get dealt – good or bad, rough or smooth – don't complain, just do your best."

GOOD WEEK

BOB DYLAN
Been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Moan if you like, but he's good, isn't he.

SHIA LABEOUF
Live-streamed his Las Vegas wedding to actress and model Mia Goth. Not legally binding. Congrats anyway!

JUSTIN BIEBER
Played footie with some London schoolkids. An eyewitness reported, "He's not good."

LILY ALLEN
Got a lot of s**t for apologising to refugees on the UK's behalf. She stood her ground, like a hero.

BAD WEEK

New

The new, slimmer PS4 and PlayStation VR. Pick your winning line-up.

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3.

3. PlayStation 4 1TB + Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare

£309.99

Model: PlayStation 4 1TB Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare. Product support £64 for 3 years. **Offer valid until 23.11.16.** Download and play Call of Duty Remastered Campaign 30 days early from 05.10.16. Infinite Warfare full game download available from 04.11.16.

4.

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Requires PlayStation 4 system. PlayStation Move and PlayStation camera (all sold separately). Product support £64 for 3 years.

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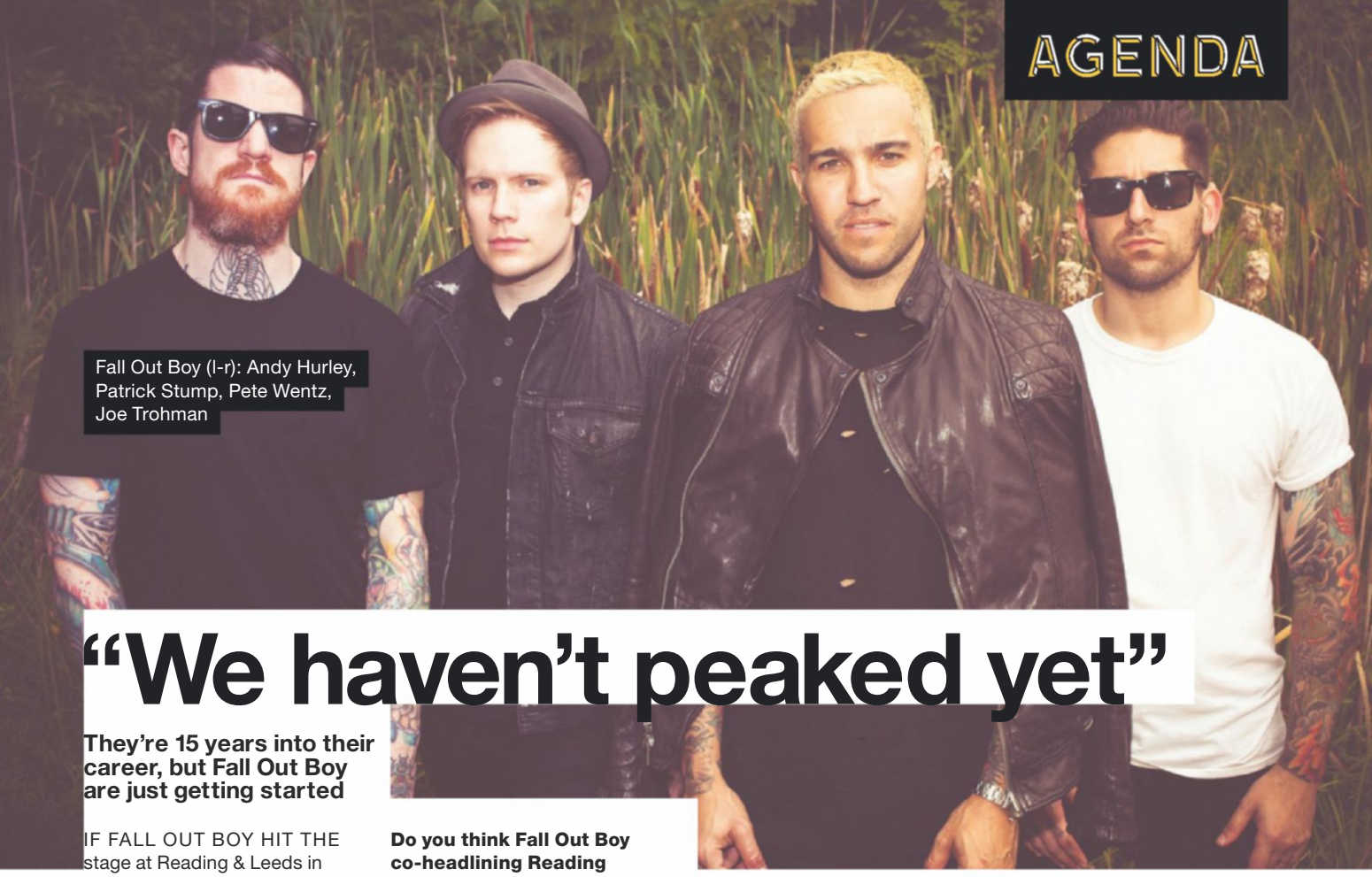


Fall Out Boy (l-r): Andy Hurley, Patrick Stump, Pete Wentz, Joe Trohman

"We haven't peaked yet"

They're 15 years into their career, but Fall Out Boy are just getting started

INTERVIEW: MARK BEAUMONT. PHOTO: JACK EDINGER

IF FALL OUT BOY HIT THE stage at Reading & Leeds in August with distant grins on their faces, it wasn't just a blissed-out sense of achievement at hitting the headline slot after 15 years. They were probably still feeling the secondary-inhalation after-affects of spending the summer touring the US with Wiz Khalifa, a man who once rapped "*I ain't addicted, I'm committed*" about his weed habit. Now the boggle-eyed results are set to appear on film, as the *Boys Of Zummer Tour: Live In Chicago* is released on October 21, capturing Fall Out Boy's hit-drenching homecoming show in front of 25,000 fans. We asked bassist Pete Wentz about festival headlining and Uma Thurman thinking their songs are "cute".

Do you think Fall Out Boy co-headlining Reading & Leeds is a sign that the noughties emo scene was getting respect at last?
"We built slowly at Reading & Leeds – we've played so many slots there. It was cool to drive in and see the likes of Nine Inch Nails and Biffy headlining and being like, 'Maybe there's potential to get there one day.' But to have that actually happen was pretty f**king ridiculous."

What do you remember about filming the Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre gig in Chicago for the DVD?
"It used to be called the World Music Theatre or something like that. My dad saw Jimmy Buffett there about 20 years ago maybe. It was cool to be able to play a hometown show. That stage is designed to take a stadium show so it's pretty crazy. I remember there were so many frequencies going on you could hear it in your ears and monitors. There was so much distortion going on."

Was it the culmination of the band's comeback?
"Yeah. We thought we'd be able to come back and play clubs and theatres, so to be able to play a big outside show was pretty cool, especially in our hometown. It felt like the culmination of a long process. To play in front of 25,000 people in your hometown, it's intense. We were playing in front of a lot of kids that didn't know us. About half the crowd were more familiar with Wiz, so we went out and tried to throw a knockout."

Did the film capture the band at its peak?
"I hope not. I hope we haven't peaked yet!"

Has Uma Thurman responded to your song 'Uma Thurman'?
"We sent it to her to clear it. I think she said it was 'cute'. I don't know how I'd feel if some band had a song called 'Pete Wentz', but, fortunately my name doesn't sing very well so I think I'm safe."

***The Boys Of Zummer Tour: Live In Chicago* DVD is out now**

Want to see London's best new acts for free?

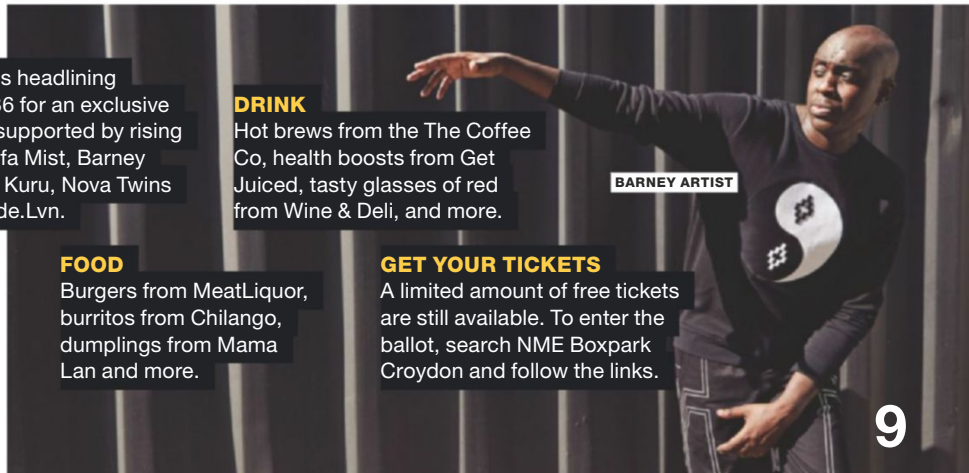
Boxpark Croydon, a cool new food, drink and event space, is opening soon, and *NME* is hosting a free launch party on October 30 to celebrate. There will be...

MUSIC
Jay Prince is headlining (see page 36 for an exclusive interview), supported by rising stars A2, Alfa Mist, Barney Artist, Club Kuru, Nova Twins and Tailr.Mde.Lvn.

DRINK
Hot brews from the The Coffee Co, health boosts from Get Juiced, tasty glasses of red from Wine & Deli, and more.

FOOD
Burgers from MeatLiquor, burritos from Chilango, dumplings from Mama Lan and more.

GET YOUR TICKETS
A limited amount of free tickets are still available. To enter the ballot, search NME Boxpark Croydon and follow the links.



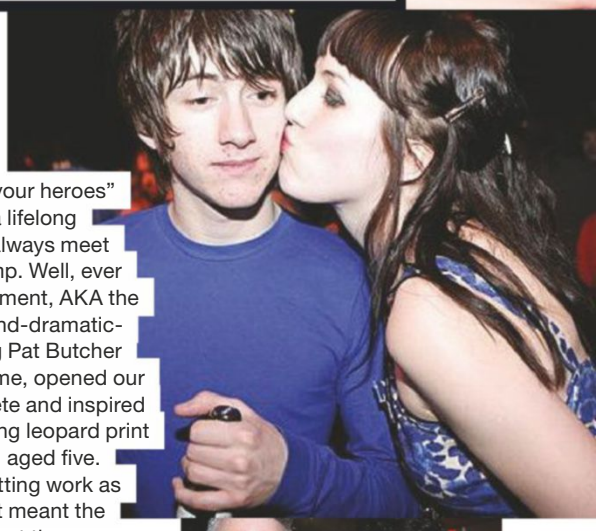
BARNEY ARTIST

ON THE RECORD

BIG OPINIONS. NO FILTER.

THIS WEEK

Why you should always meet your heroes



THIS WEEK YOU FIND ME IN a state of mourning. As I write this column, my one true love, the man of my dreams, the person who never fails to lift my spirits by the sheer force of his engine-oil-dirtied denim and New Jersey real talk is somewhere in London, somewhere *near me*, and about to do a meet and greet session. Yes, Bruce Springsteen, poet of the people, American hero, my own personal nomination for the next President of the United States and surprisingly buff 67-year-old is signing copies of his memoir *Born To Run* in a central London bookshop, but guttingly I was one of the many distressed thousands unable to get a ticket.

Rewind a week and there I was, hunched over my laptop, constantly refreshing the Waterstones ticketing site, then panicking and wondering if all that refreshing meant I'd lost my place in the queue. A little green electronic man on my screen tracking my progress in the line froze as the site crashed again. And then again. And once more, just to really stick the boot in. Then, after an hour of high-octane site reloading and intense snacking on a family sized bag of Monster Munch, I realised the dream was over. I was not going to meet Bruce Springsteen, let alone greet him.

As I listened to 'Nebraska' – the Boss's saddest album – and posted a series of miserable Springsteen GIFs on Twitter, a first responder to my tragic scene tried to cheer me up with the "never meet your heroes" line. Sadly, I am a lifelong member of the "always meet your heroes" camp. Well, ever since Pam St Clement, AKA the flamboyant-fur-and-dramatic-earrings-sporting Pat Butcher of *EastEnders* fame, opened our primary school fête and inspired me to start wearing leopard print to the classroom, aged five.

"I nervously called Leonard Cohen 'Mr Cohen'"

Years later, getting work as a music journalist meant the opportunity to meet the very people I idolised was a weekly possibility. There I was, getting coffee with the late, great Poly Styrene of iconic punk band X-Ray Spex in St Leonards, chatting about the Chelsea Hotel with Patti Smith in Newcastle, racking a miniature pool table with Josh Homme, asking for a photo with Leonard Cohen (I nervously called him "Mr Cohen") in a hotel in central London, talking about gold brogues with Debbie Harry, shaking Stevie Nicks' tiny hand on a red carpet in Hollywood, planting a sloppy kiss on Alex Turner's cheek at the NME Awards, just, well, just because, and then telling Billy Bragg and Jamie T an awful joke at the same event the following year. Did I regret any of it? Hardly. So Bruce Springsteen, evidently this week wasn't meant to be, but I haven't given up hope just yet. **@leoniemaycooper**

Leonie with Alex, Billy and Jamie

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EATS & BEATS

BECAUSE YOU CAN'T ROCK OUT ON AN EMPTY STOMACH

THIS WEEK

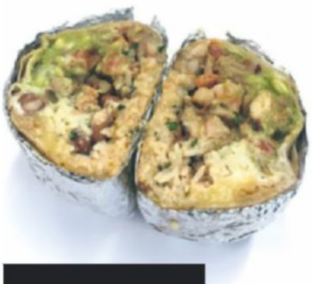
Hack the menu

Access a hidden world of fast-food deliciousness by ordering these off-menu delights

Stormzy – the man behind the #MERKY burger

NANDO'S

Ask for: A #MERKY burger
What you'll get: A halloumi burger in a garlic bread bun.
Fun fact: Grime MC Stormzy got Nando's to introduce the #MERKY burger to their repertoire back in March.
It'll cost ya: £3.55



CHIPOTLE

Ask for: A quesarito
What you'll get: A burrito wrapped in a cheese quesadilla.
Fun fact: It's so popular it has its own Facebook fan pages.
It'll cost ya: £10.20

BURGER KING

Ask for: Frings
What you'll get: Half French fries, half onion rings.
Fun fact: These are… *delicious.*
It'll cost ya: £2.35

PIZZA EXPRESS

Ask for: Any of the classic pizzas that Pizza Express used to serve, but are no longer on the menu
What you'll get: Enjoy a Four Seasons. Devour a Carbonara. Salivate over an Etna.
Fun fact: All the chicken used in Pizza Express is Halal.
It'll cost ya: Depending on what you ask for, you're looking at £10-14

MCDONALD'S

Ask for: A Big McChicken
What you'll get: a Big Mac, with McChicken patties instead of bread. For hygiene reasons, McDonald's can't actually serve you one, so go DIY – order a Big Mac and three McChickens and replace the bread with the chicken patties.
Fun fact: The perfect fast food option for anyone currently on the Atkins or Paleo diets, which both ditch the bread.
It'll cost ya: £12.36

WORDS: VICTORIA CAMIDGE. PHOTOS: REX FEATURES

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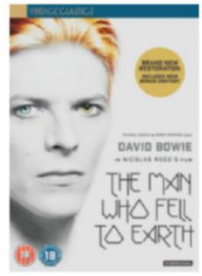
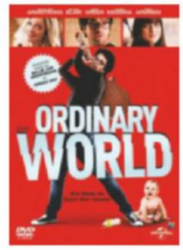


Bowie brilliance
The Man Who Fell To Earth 40th anniversary collector's edition is out on Monday.
£19.99 *amazon.co.uk*

Reclaim the sleeves
Topshop Reclaim is a sustainable line that puts excess material to stylish use.
£45 *topshop.com*

Jean genie
Volcom's denim line boasts a number of cosy, comfy jeans.
£55 *penloe.com*

Velvet goldmine
People will want to stroke this velvet backpack. Let them.
£36 *urbanoutfitters.com*



Movie punk
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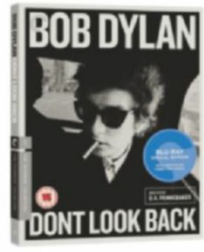

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YOUR TOWN. YOUR MUSIC. YOUR STYLE

What's on your Headphones?

THIS WEEK

Portsmouth Uni

‹ MAZ KALAM
20, psychology

Listening to:
AJ TRACEY
Leave Me Alone
"I just love grime. It's sick!"

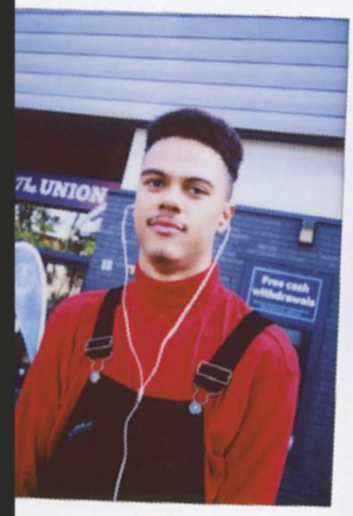
Wearing: Adidas baseball jacket, Ralph Lauren T-shirt.
Best thing about Portsmouth: "The community's great. It's small but big at the same time somehow."
If you could take an instax of a star, who would it be? "J Cole – then I could get him to sign me."

"I just love grime. It's sick!"

MARLEY GIBBONS-BALFOUR ›
20, maths

Listening to:
KAYTRANADA
Vivid Dreams
"I like the throwback '90s vibe."

Wearing: turtleneck from charity shop, vintage dungarees.
Best thing about Portsmouth: "Albert Road is great for going out."
If you could take an instax of a star, who would it be? "Kaytranada."



‹ KAROHL BARROZO LORENZONI
18, foreign languages

Listening to:
ANNE-MARIE
Alarm
"It tells a great story."

Wearing: top from Sports Direct, California jumper.
Best thing about Portsmouth: "Nightlife."
If you could take an instax of a star, who would it be? "Emma Watson. She's doing great work."

PHOTOS: LAURA PALMER

YARIN HIRANI ›
20, int. development

Listening to:
SOLDIERS OF JAH ARMY
You Don't Know Me
"I listen to a lot of reggae. Anything by SOJA is great."

Wearing: cord shirt from charity shop, Rip Curl tee.
Best thing about Portsmouth: "The beach."
If you could take an instax of a star, who would it be? "M.I.A."

JORDAN WILSON ›
23, marine biology

Listening to:
CATFISH AND THE BOTTLEMEN
Cocoon
"I *have* to see them live."

Wearing: H&M hoodie.
Best thing about Portsmouth: "The unpredictable weather – it makes it really interesting."
If you could take an instax of a star, who would it be? "Mumford & Sons."

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LADY GAGA AND THE GAGA REVAMP

Pop megastar Lady Gaga is back with a genre-hopping album to surprise even the most ardent fans – and it's all thanks to spiritual guidance from her deceased aunt. Dan Stubbs hears how 'Joanne' helped heal long-held family rifts and brought Gaga back from the brink

On September 9, Lady Gaga hopped onto the stage at London's Moth Club, a sweaty Hackney venue with gold-painted walls and a shimmering Quality-Street-wrapper stage curtain. Wearing a grey jersey crop top and silver shorts, she debuted 'Perfect Illusion', the rocky new single from her new album 'Joanne', which is out today. On it, Gaga does country, rock, disco, pop and all points in between. There's a duet with Florence Welch that sounds like Elton John's 'Bennie And The Jets', a love song dedicated to John Wayne and a weirdo pop track with Beck in which all the lyrics seem to be thin euphemisms for masturbation. On the cover: Lady Gaga in side profile, hardly any make-up. It's a face that should be recognisable but somehow isn't.

For the people crammed into Moth Club it must have felt like an alien encounter – seeing a true, untouchable superstar in the flesh in a club that looks like Del Boy Trotter's boudoir. But that's key to the 'Joanne' experience. While it's an album that heads in many directions, all of them are populist and accessible – fodder for the jukebox in a your local dive bar, or to soundtrack your hot dogs during next year's Super Bowl half-time show. Gaga's back and she wants to go for a beer with you. Except, she insists, it's not that cynical.

"None of the records I make are ever a deliberate construction – they're always an expression of who I am at the time and where I am in my life," she says, on the phone from an "undisclosed location" in the desert. "My intention was to, you know, connect with people that would not normally connect with someone like me."

Interesting phrase, because what, exactly, *is* Lady Gaga like?

On her 2008 debut, things were simple: she sang about 'The Fame' and became famous as a result – monstrously, massively famous, with 15 million albums sold and a 203-date arena spectacular tour that grossed more than $200m. Off the back of that, second album 'Born This Way' celebrated individuality and ramped up the Gaga-ness to the point where one edition depicted her as a part-human, part-motorbike hybrid. Then came 2013's high concept third album 'ArtPop', the artist as an art object. Its singles failed to chime and its conceit tested listeners, preaching more to her hardcore of Little Monsters – the faithful fan group who refer to her as 'Mother Monster' and look up to her as their guru.

Gaga sidesteps the notion that the album misfired ("I felt, to be honest, more connected to my fans than ever doing 'ArtPop' – especially during the [ArtRave] tour," she insists), but she admits that all was not rosy. Soon after its release, she contemplated quitting music for good. Or, rather, quitting the fame game.

"I was just having a really depressed time in my life where I wasn't able to see my own ability or my own talent," she says. "And when you lose grasp of those sorts of things, you can just spiral. But you know, to the world 'quitting music' means one thing and to me it means another. I meant giving up putting out music, as opposed to just doing it for myself, which is what makes me really and truly happy.

"When you become famous or you become a star, there's all these other things that begin

GAGA

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to happen, and you have to work the system – especially in the music industry today, which is so different. You're dealing with this streaming war and it's an absolute nightmare to witness as an artist because it's not about music and it's all about business – and that's just not who I am at all. At the end of the day, who I really and truly am is a little girl who loved to play the piano.

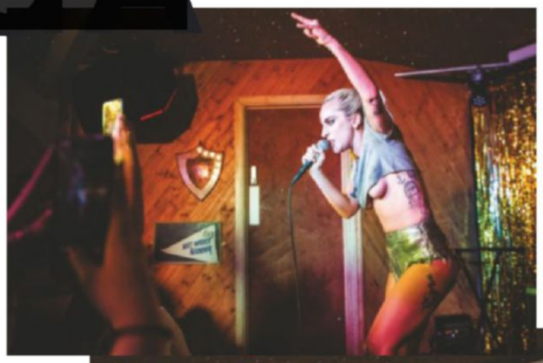
"So once you start putting that little girl into the system, she starts to get kind of… well, why am I doing this? What I want for my fans and for the world, for anyone who feels pain, is to lean into that pain and embrace it as much as they can and begin the healing process." So that's what she did.

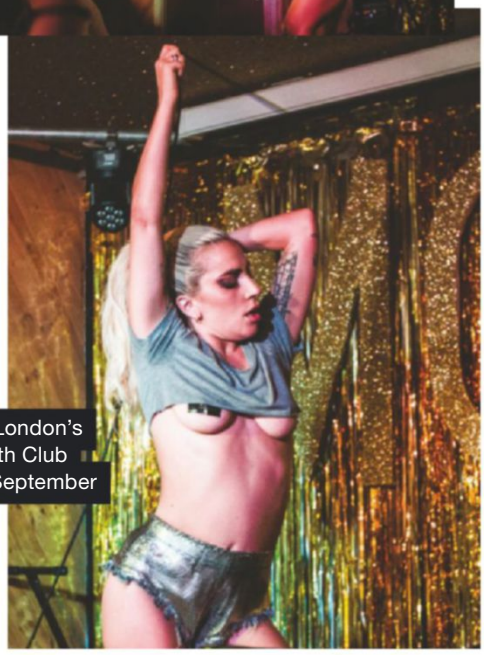
For Gaga, the healing process seemed to involve wearing as many masks as possible, spinning existing strands of her art into bigger projects that challenged fans further.

In 2014, Gaga the jazzer released the 'Cheek To Cheek' album with crooner Tony Bennett. In 2015, Gaga the Broadway kid performed a medley of *The Sound Of Music* songs at the Oscars. That autumn, Gaga the actress took on a recurring role in TV's *American Horror Story*, for which she won a Golden Globe. Her last high-profile public appearance was at February's Grammy Awards, where she turned in a heartfelt but divisive tribute to the late David Bowie. Bowie's son, film director Duncan Jones, called it "mentally confused" on Twitter.

"I really did not want to do it when they first called me because it was so soon after [Bowie's death] and I felt very uncomfortable, but I did my very best to put together something that I hoped would be the showstopper of the night," she says now. Did Jones' comments hurt? "Yeah. It did. It did hurt," she says slowly. "But what are you going to do? I can't… it's his father, you know?"

A fair question, amid all the ch-ch-changes, was this: where had the fun, outrageous, bulletproof popstar gone? And today, Gaga credits the late Joanne Germanotta for pulling her out of that "spiral" and bringing that person back.





At London's Moth Club in September

PHOTOS: COLLIER SCHORR JENN FIVE, TOM BEARD, EMMA TILLMAN, TOM OXLEY, DAVE EDWARDS, GETTY

"LIFE IS A DOG FIGHT FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE"

Joanne was Gaga's aunt, who died of the autoimmune disease lupus eight years before Gaga was born. The singer takes one of her names – Stefani Joanne Angelina – from her dad's sister, and feels she lives on in her.

"I've had faith my whole life that there was someone looking out for me, a spirit guide, a soul guide," she says. "An angel hovering somewhere, who was going to help lead the way."

Embracing the idea that her aunt was looking out for her led Gaga to delve into her relationship with her father.

"I think I've realised that for many years I felt it my responsibility to heal him, but in truth it's maybe not my responsibility at all," she says. "I never understood the rage and anger of my father, but understanding his loss of his sister in Joanne, this helped me understand more where his pain came from – and where my pain came from, because it came from him. I am who I am because of my family and I carried a lot of shame for a long time about being rebellious. But what I've realised is that the toughness in me is something that comes from what came before me, and everything my family and their family before them went through."

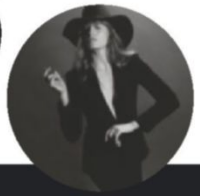
It might, I suggest, surprise people to hear she feels shameful about anything. Gaga proudly stands against bullying and intolerance – her charitable Born This Way Foundation works for that cause – but she also stands for an overbearing confidence in the self. You don't just pull a meat dress out of your wardrobe of an evening.

"Well, I say [shame] because I'm a Catholic," she says. "Even in the Bible, it says that if you sing you're a harlot. These sorts of things get ingrained in you at a young age. So as I grew up and was the way that I was – very different, very unique – whether it was people at school making fun of me or my father telling me that I was defiant or a 'bad girl', those things stay with you and they creep back in when the loop of negativity comes back into your life."

The teenage Gaga, she says, was "a real Jersey girl" – crop tops, voluminous hair, plenty of make-up. "I was a fun young woman who was looking for herself, but growing up in an Italian-American household doing things like that, it's not taken very well."

It's a feeling that continued when she started performing, but it began in puberty. "Growing up, somehow there was a shame in your womanhood, like as soon as you get breasts or as soon as you look like a woman – this can create conflict in the house," she says.

A sense of looking back at Gaga's past is ever-present in



Gaga's gang

A who's who of 'Joanne' collaborators

FATHER JOHN MISTY
Who: Cult-leaderesque persona of singer-songwriter Josh Tillman.
Appears on: The old-school country-styled 'Sinner's Prayer'.

FLORENCE WELCH
Who: Singer with Florence + The Machine.
Appears on: 'Hey Girl', a '70s Elton homage about going on the razz with your best girl pal.

MARK RONSON
Who: 'Uptown Funk' hitmaker and producer of Amy Winehouse's classic 'Back To Black'.
Appears on: Everything, as producer.

BECK
Who: Pop polymath back in favour following 2015 hit single 'Dreams'.
Appears on: Wonky pop song Dancing In Circles.

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'Joanne'. The track 'Diamond Heart' tells the story of a girl working as a go-go dancer to make ends meet, lyrically the kind of broken American dream Bruce Springsteen sings about. That girl, Gaga confirms, is her. "It's completely autobiographical," she says. "When I moved downtown [New York] at 17 I became a go-go dancer. I remember looking at the men and thinking to myself: 'Lay it on me. I know that you think you know what I am, but the truth is I may not be perfect – *yeah, Dad!* – and I might not be flawless – *Dad! World!* – but I have a diamond heart. I have a good and strong spirit within me.' Life is a dog fight for a lot of people. When you find the pitbull within yourself, that's Joanne."

For an album fuelled by the complexities of the father-daughter relationship, Gaga's commune of 'Joanne' collaborators makes for interesting reading. She assembled a kind of hipster-rock biker gang – comprising crooning lothario Father John Misty, totemic Queens Of The Stone Age frontman Josh Homme, pop oddball Beck, 'Sorry' songwriter Bloodpop, Tame Impala frontman Kevin Parker and mega-voiced Brit Florence Welch – and took them off to the California desert to work with super-producer Mark Ronson. It sounds, it must be said, a very male environment.

"It was a lot of dudes, but what's great is there was a boys' club and they *let me in it*. To embrace me as a musician was such a healing moment for me in my life – to not be treated as just any other pop star."

That, really, is key: Gaga is not just any other pop star, and 'Joanne' is not just any album. At the point of writing, four days before its release, the record is still totally under wraps to all but us privileged few who've been permitted to listen to it on an iPod in the offices of her label Polydor. But 'Perfect Illusion' – which is already out – hasn't been the comeback smash you might expect, peaking at Number 12 in the UK and Number 15 in the US. Outside of the Little Monster faithful, some are questioning whether Gaga still has it.

Gaga on…

BEING COMPARED TO DAVID BOWIE
"I don't know why people compare me to Bowie, because there will never be another David Bowie and no one is comparable to him. It makes me uncomfortable – I just want to be me."

LIVE PLANS
"What I would say to those fans who are terrified that I'll never again embrace absurdity or the avant-garde is, 'Think again.' Because that is my favourite thing."

GLASTONBURY 2017 HEADLINE SLOT RUMOURS
"Glaaastonbury! I don't have permission to say anything about that."

INSPIRING YOUNG WOMEN
"I've taken my clothes off for all sorts of things, but I hope young girls can see that to move forward in this business, it does not have to be based on your body or your looks. The truth is my looks have never been the best thing about me and I'm fine with that. I'm not here to be a supermodel, I'm here to be a musician."

Gaga's not to be shaken.

"Opinions are like assholes; everybody has one," she says. "Definitely I did not make this album with the opinion of the world being thrust at me constantly through the toilet of the internet. I used the opinions of Mark Ronson and my collaborators – and my own opinion. Because I have to trust my own opinion. Not to sound arrogant, because I truly don't believe I'm an arrogant person, but after selling 80 million records, you gotta kinda go: 'OK, why the f**k right now would I throw in the towel and worry what everybody thinks of me?'"

She has a point. But you suspect there's one other opinion she wanted: that of her father, who inspired so much of the project. So does he like it?

"I'll never forget it," she says. "We were mastering the album in New York and my father was going, 'You know, my god, MY GOD, you've made a lot of great records but this one, this one is REALLY a great record!' So my father loves it. But he's my dad, so…"

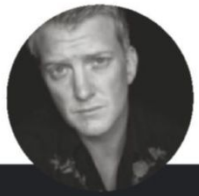
That's the new Gaga then; more likely to be found in New York's Joanne Trattoria, the restaurant she runs with her family, than in the club; more likely to wear denim shorts than a dress made of Kermits. Is it the true Gaga or a 'Perfect Illusion'? Happily, we may never really know.

NME

BLOODPOP
Who: Formerly known as Blood Diamonds, the producer has worked with Grimes and Justin Bieber.
Appears on: Numerous tracks, as co-producer.

REDONE
Who: Hitmaking co-producer behind many of Gaga's early hits.
Appears on: The album's moving closing track 'Angel Down'.

KEVIN PARKER
Who: Long-haired leader of Perth psych rockers Tame Impala.
Appears on: 'Perfect Illusion', which he co-wrote with Gaga.



JOSH HOMME
Who: Queens Of The Stone Age frontman.
Appears on: Five tracks as co-writer ('Diamond Heart' and 'John Wayne') and guitarist.

HILLARY LINDSEY
Who: US songwriter noted for her work in the country genre.
Appears on: Co-writer on both 'Million Reasons' and 'Ayo'.

FEAR OF A BROWN

Swet Shop Boys bring controversial, emotionally charged minefields to the mainstream in the form of stone-cold hip-hop bangers. Joe Madden meets the men behind the statements

MUSIC IS OFTEN AT its most exhilarating when it's shoving back against an unjust, uncaring world. Think reggae artists fighting Jamaica's oppression of Rastafarianism in the '70s; UK and US punks venting their spleens at Thatcher and Reagan in the '80s; or early '90s hip hop dealing with the fallout from the LA riots. There's no non-crass way of putting this, but suffering, oppression and agonised political discontent can make for amazing pop music.

Case in point: Swet Shop Boys, a US-UK rap supergroup (superduo?) comprising Heems, ex of disbanded alt-rap crew Das Racist, and Riz MC, better known as Riz Ahmed, star of *Four Lions*, *Nightcrawler*, *Jason Bourne* and HBO's buzzed-over *The Night Of*, as well as the upcoming *Star Wars* spin-off *Rogue One*. Together, the pair are marching straight into some of the most emotionally charged minefields imaginable: immigration, Islamophobia, refugees, drone attacks, shifting national identities, the mainstreaming of far-right politics… If it makes people uncomfortable, Riz and Heems are all over it.

If that sounds like a recipe for worthy, eat-your-greens music of the most tiresomely lecturing kind, be assured that Swet Shop Boys' number one priority is producing stone-cold hip-hop bangerz – they're competing for your attention with Drake, Danny Brown and Young Thug, not broadsheet think-pieces and socially conscious hashtags.

I'm conference-calling with Riz and Heems from their respective home cities, London and New York. Perhaps unsurprisingly, both men speak like they rap: Riz rapidly and intensely, Heems casually and often tangentially.

The pair first hooked up when Heems gave Riz a transatlantic nod of approval for his 2006 single – as Riz MC – 'Post 9/11 Blues'. "I was playing Glastonbury, taking a s**t backstage, and Heems tweeted me about the track from the Das Racist account," recalls Riz (TMI, BTW). "We kept in touch but didn't link up until 2012, when I was researching [New York borough] Queens for *The Night Of*. Himanshu [Heems' real name] is from Queens, so he showed me around."

They were soon collaborating on tracks, casually at first, then more earnestly as it became clear that they were onto something. First came 2014's feisty 'Swet Shop' mini-mixtape, then a triptych of rugged, confrontational singles – 'Tiger Hologram', 'T5' and 'Zayn Malik'. Now there's 'Cashmere', the Boys' debut album, a place where hard Brooklyn beats meet giddy Bollywood funk, and the quickfire, agitated lyricism of UK rap meets the more languid flow of New York.

"We definitely do have different ways of attacking the beat, but our lyrical content is similar," says Heems, explaining how their contrasting styles can co-exist. "The content is our middle ground, where Riz and me meet." That content is invariably nerve-touching stuff. 'T5', for example, deals with Riz and Heems' experiences of blatant racial profiling by airport security. "With a track like 'T5'," says Heems, "people who can relate to it directly will appreciate it, but it's also about explaining that experience to those who may not be familiar with it."

Even those of us who've never felt singled out for having brown skin can still relate to a track like this "on a different level", reckons Riz. "Growing up, me and my friends would idolise African-American rappers, and we just couldn't relate to their experience. We couldn't relate to 2Pac growing up in LA – but his feeling of having outsider status and of having the odds stacked

(L-r:) Riz MC, Heems

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PLANET

"America is better at celebrating hybrid forms, being a nation of immigrants"

against him, that really spoke to us. It really resonated with us, emotionally, at a thematic level.

"There are a lot of people who aren't of South Asian descent and maybe haven't experienced racism, but who still feel like outsiders or like they're being forced to choose between binary identities – their sexual identity, racial identity, class identity, whatever – when their natural identity is mongrel. It's that feeling of, 'I don't fit in. I'm a mongrel. F**k you and f**k your categories, I'm gonna be me.'"

Riz continues: "This record will resonate with those people as well, because the more specific you are in talking about your experience, the more universal it becomes."

Amid all the soul-searching and anger-venting, Riz and Heems never forget to inject a few cathartic lolz into their music. "Heems put his finger on the kind of humour it is," says Riz. "He described it as 'laughing to stop yourself from crying'."

Heems is, however, keen to distance his Swet Shop Boys output from his previous releases as one third of Das Racist, who treated everything – themselves included – as a valid target for mockery. "I don't associate a lot of humour with this project," he says. "I've heard people call it a 'funny' or 'sarcastic' or 'playful' take on these subjects – but considering the direction I was coming from with Das Racist, which was blatantly sarcastic and humorous, this music is comparatively not playful at all. But then I guess don't hear it in the way other people do."

(Infinitely more serious Swet Shop Boys may be, but Heems can't help but let the odd Das Racist-ism slip through – see the pleasingly childish lyrics of 'Zayn Malik': "*Shout out to my sister / I miss her / Shout out to your sister / I kissed her*".)

Swet Shop Boys aren't only unique for their willingness to gleefully wrestle with 2016's 'hot-button' issues – they're also pretty much the only rappers of South Asian descent visible within hip-hop right now. "Here in the UK," says Riz, "a lot of South Asian communities are working class – we have ghettos, we have hoods – and MCing is a very natural way to express yourself in those contexts. And so we do have a lot of sick South Asian MCs, but they don't get mainstream attention, partly because of the way the UK's media landscape is organised, where you have these ghettoised 'ethnic' radio stations – the Asian music station and so on. You can have the white person in a band, or the black guy in a grime video, but you can't have the brown person, from-the-hood-but-went-to-a-good-uni, and he's rapping.

"I think we're slow to embrace hybrids. America is better at celebrating hybrid forms, being a nation of immigrants." Prove Riz wrong, Britain – embrace Swet Shop Boys like you've been waiting forever for them.

NME

"Did he just say what I think he said?!"

Rappers have long thrived on near-the-knuckle lyricism and Swet Shop Boys are no exception – they've got rewind-worthy, nervous-laughter-illiciting lines to spare...

*"I pray for my nephew, I pray you're not antagonised / By all the hating and news and s**t they sanitise / Look: Zayn Malik's got more than 80 virgins on him / There's more than one direction to get to paradise"*
RIZ MC ON 'ZAYN MALIK'

"She wants to sing songs on my ding dong / With the white girl like I'm King Kong"
HEEMS ON 'URVASI'

"Trump want my exit / But if he press the red button to watch Netflix, bruv, I'm on"
RIZ MC ON 'T5'

"I was doing lines, I was drinking wine / No pork on my fork, no swine when I dine / I'm from cop-killer Queens, kill a cop and it's fine / I read pigs are haram in the book that's divine"
HEEMS ON 'SHOTTIN'

PHOTO: EREZ AVISSAR

OLD DOGS NU TRICKS

(L-r:) Reggie ‘Fieldy’ Arvizu, Jonathan Davis, Brian ‘Head’ Welch, Ray Luzier and James ‘Munky’ Shaffer

God’s favourite Californian nu-metallers Korn are back with their 12th album ‘The Serenity Of Suffering’ and it’s a return to their heavy ’90s heyday. Thea De Gallier talks to guitarist Brian ‘Head’ Welch about the unlikely revival of nu-metal and how they’ve avoided becoming a nostalgia act

WHATEVER happened to nu-metal? The days of puddle-absorbingly wide trousers, wallet chains and poor attempts at white-guy dreadlocks seem like a fleeting moment in metal's chequered history, and yet the genre that's always polarised fans of heavy music seems to be in rude health. Linkin Park are working on a new album, up-and-coming bands are fleshing out their sound with electronica, and this December, Korn – the band often credited with kicking off the nu-metal scene – are touring arenas with Limp Bizkit in tow. No, it's not 1999.

Before the tour, Korn release their 12th album, 'The Serenity Of Suffering'. Guitarist Brian 'Head' Welch rejoined them in 2013 after taking eight years away from the band he helped form in '93, and it's his second album with them since the reunion. "I absolutely love this new record," he says over the phone. "I'm the type of person where life is too short and if I'm not passionate about doing something then I don't wanna be there. We only have a certain number of years on the planet and I want to be doing something that I love." Superfluous nuggets of contrived positivity like that pepper our chat, although judging by Head's interview demeanour since he rejoined Korn – rejuvenated by his faith and almost decade-long abstention from drugs – these kind of soundbites are to be expected.

In 2013, just after he resumed his guitar duties, he wrote blithely in his column on US music site Loudwire that God was a Korn fan: "There was a time when I didn't think God would be very into Korn's music and lifestyle, but I've learned that He loves everyone where they're at. And I know God loves Korn's music because it's passionate and very honest." He also wrote that while recording 2013's 'The Paradigm Shift', he felt "like I never left", and hearing him talk animatedly about 'The Serenity Of Suffering' it's obvious he's well and truly back into his stride.

The album is full of the kind of percussive, bouncing riffs that 1999's multi-million-selling album 'Issues' relied on, and lyrically it's a cry of anguish. "It's about JD's relationships and stuff," Head says of frontman Jonathan Davis's words. "It seems like he lets people hurt him and he puts up with it; he's been through a lot in his personal life. He says he finds strength and serenity in suffering for people he loves; I don't know if that's a good quality, or damaging to his soul. He's a really nice guy, but I think sometimes it gets the best of him; sometimes people take advantage."

'The Serenity Of Suffering' might have ended up as a vehicle for Davis to exorcise his demons, but Head says that at the start of the writing process, the vocalist didn't like the music he and guitarist Munky were writing. "He was like, 'I wanna like it, but I'm not really passionate about it,'" Head explains. "In his words, he had to fall in love with heavy music again because he was getting into electronic music and he still loves that, but he knew we wanted to do this. He just kept working on the songs, and he wasn't a jerk about it – he just kept trying. When he came up with something that he liked, it would encourage him. Now he really likes it."

This collaborative atmosphere is a far cry from the public trash-talking Head and Davis partook of in 2005 after Head left the band and turned to religion. He reportedly accused his former bandmates of only caring about money, to which Davis responded by calling Christians "the biggest f**king con artists in the world" and saying Head's new lifestyle "kinda weirds me out". The mud-slinging continued on and off until 2011, when Head announced he and the band were back on good terms.

An album that harks so obviously back to Korn's early days is a double-edged sword. On one hand, it's a return to form for the band, who started experimenting with dubstep with Skrillex before Head rejoined them. He says they chose Roadrunner Records to release the new album because they're "very passionate about it. [They] wanted to get the message out there to the rock world that Korn is back". But with any blast from the past, there's the danger of becoming nothing more than a nostalgia trip or, worse, a novelty. The fact that they're about to tour with Limp Bizkit suggests that Korn are either embracing this or simply don't give a f**k.

"I'll take what I can get," laughs Head, when I ask if he's bothered that some people might regard Korn as nothing more than a throwback to nu-metal's heyday. "Whoever wants to think of us like that, it's fine with us. We're pleased, because we're still doing rock radio and in America we have a Top Five single next to Green Day and Metallica." Does he worry about fitting into the modern metal scene, where trends seem to be veering towards metalcore and something of a punk revival? "You want to stay relevant and cool," he admits. "Whatever happens to Korn, we should be thankful for where we've gotten because even if we fell off, we've had a very long career. But when we write a record, we want people to get excited. We want people to like our art. It's fun to have a lot of people come to your shows and go crazy. Obviously we want success."

He feels that pressure most when songwriting. "Our producer Nick Raskulinecz pushed us to keep recording ['The Serenity Of Suffering']. We wouldn't have 'Insane', the first song on the album, if it wasn't for him. I was saying, 'We've got to stop, I'm freaking fried!' I'm glad I listened to him. I think I get anxiety when I try to write because we were doing it for 20 years and I come into it like, 'What am I going to do that I haven't already done?'"

The answer, it seems, is to return to what Korn do best: discordant riffs and stark, biting verses. Oh, and a guest spot from Corey Taylor on the track 'A Different World'. "Nick said, 'Why don't we call Corey?'" Head remembers. "He was free the following weekend. And he's *never* free."

I ask Head if he feels that there's a renewed interest in nu-metal right now, but he's reluctant to pigeonhole Korn into the genre. "It does feel like there's a new excitement for our kind of music, but what I like about Korn is that we can fit in anywhere," he muses. "We've always been on radio, we've always been playing shows. Our first tour was with No Doubt. We've played with Sick Of It All, Ozzy [Osbourne], Megadeth, Marilyn Manson, House Of Pain… That's what I like about us, that we can blend in everywhere."

Perhaps a Korn comeback isn't such a far-fetched notion after all. Head might have gone away for a while, but he's right when he says the band never really did. As for nu-metal itself, there's a feeling that it's returning, smarter and spruced-up, as the bands that pioneered it enjoy continued success and new bands look to it for inspiration. Let's just hope it doesn't spell a return for wide-legged trousers… NME

"I know God loves Korn's music"

Nu kids on the block

This is what nu-metal sounds like in 2016

HACKTIVIST
The Milton Keynes grime/hardcore crossover outfit put a modern spin on the genre with Skepta-like bursts of rap. This year's debut won them widespread praise.
Listen to: 'Hate'

FIRE FROM THE GODS
With overtly political lyrics about frontman AJ Channer's experiences as a black American, this feels like rap metal for the modern age.
Listen to: 'Excuse Me'

THE ONE HUNDRED
Having just signed with Spinefarm Records, this outfit are about to make it big. If you like euphoric club beats as much as you like gnarly riffs, you'll like this lot.
Listen to: 'Kingsmen'

PHOTOS: DEAN KA, RISE RECORDS

The sound of success

Producer and engineer Adrian Breakspear on his top tips for would-be studio wizards

FOR ADRIAN BREAKSPEAR, a degree in Music, Acoustics and Recording at the University of Salford provided the grounding for a glittering career in the music industry. Now living in Sydney, Australia, he's a Grammy and ARIA-nominated producer and engineer who's worked with Stereophonics, Coldplay, Alicia Keys, Example, Ricky Martin and many more. He shares his top tips for success.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT COURSE

"I chose Salford because it seemed to be one of the only credible courses that focused on popular music and was based around the practical, recording aspect of things. Plus Salford and Manchester have a vibrant music scene, so I saw lots of great bands during my time there."

BE VERSATILE

"I've met people who only want to work with indie bands and consequently struggled to get good gigs. I was happy doing pop, urban and even classical sessions, and managed to keep busy as a result."

NETWORK

"I always chase up random contacts I meet. A chance meeting in the UK introduced me to my first contacts in Australia – I now live and work for a major label in Sydney."

MAKE THE MOST OF THE FACILITIES AT UNIVERSITY

"A former colleague was like that – using the studio all hours, recording every band he could. That led to his first job, recording pop artists by day and bands by night. One of those bands was Arctic Monkeys…"

BE HELPFUL WHEN YOU'RE DOING WORK EXPERIENCE

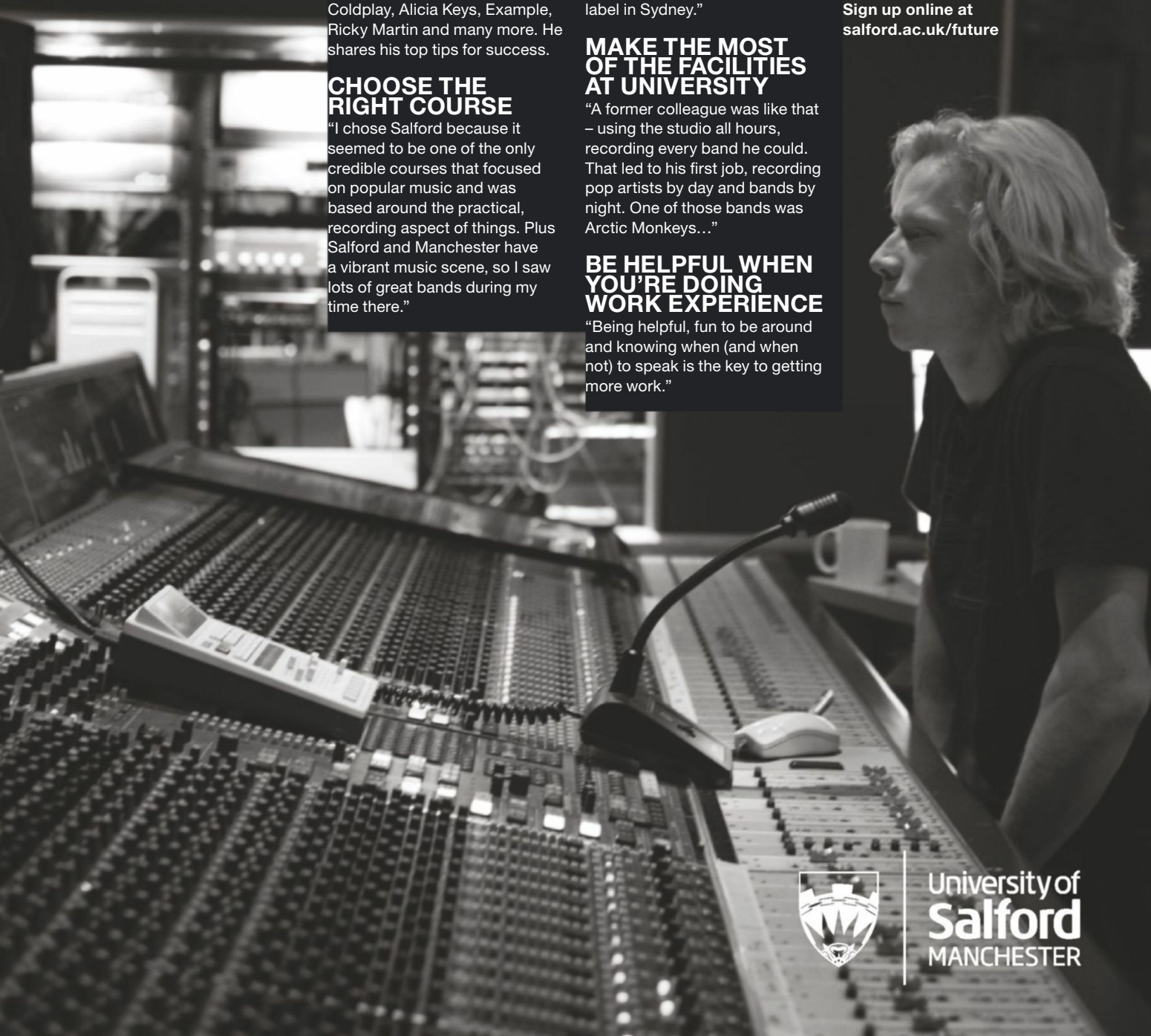
"Being helpful, fun to be around and knowing when (and when not) to speak is the key to getting more work."

KEEP LEARNING

"I worked as a runner at Abbey Road shortly after graduating and watching an orchestra record there was a good learning experience, both for technique and how to run an expensive session efficiently. You can always improve your skills by reading, joining forums, watching YouTube videos and, of course, learning over the shoulder of other, more experienced professionals."

Come along to the Open Days and check out the University of Salford with its vibrant campus, state-of-the-art facilities and hands-on courses. Sign up online at salford.ac.uk/future

PHOTO: OSCAR COLMAN



University of Salford MANCHESTER

RADAR

MUSIC, FILM, TV & MORE – THIS WEEK'S ESSENTIAL NEW RELEASES

Best NEW tracks

And when to drop them

BEST FOR PRETENDING IT'S 1994

CLOUD NOTHINGS

Modern Act

A little bit Lemonheads, a little bit Pavement, 'Modern Act' is basically a sonic time machine, taking you back two decades to prime post-grunge US indie territory. Lovely.

BEST FOR DAYDREAMING

PATIENCE

The Pressure

Roxanne Clifford – formerly of moody indie types Veronica Falls – goes all out electro-pop on this dreamy Italo-inspired alterna-hit.

BEST FOR LICKING YOUR LIPS

SÄLEN

Copper Kiss

Look up Copper Kiss on Urban Dictionary and never hear this perky synthpop song from London trio Sälen in the same way ever again.

BEST FOR DOING THE TWIST

GEORGIE

Company Of Thieves

Produced by Spacebomb Records founder Matthew E. White, this is an unsurprisingly soulful 1960s shimmy, with a decent dose of darkness as well as decadence.

BEST FOR CASTING SPELLS

HO99O9

The Dope Dealerz

Hardcore punk meets experimental hip hop with Ho99o9's gloriously demonic new single. About to do something naughty? You've just found the perfect soundtrack.

BEST FOR WALTZING

MINI MANSIONS

Secret Lovers

Taken from the LA trio's upcoming B-sides collection, 'Secret Lovers' is an old school ballroom number by way of a glam-rock disco.

BEST FOR POLITICAL STATEMENTS

JIM JAMES

Same Old Lie

My Morning Jacket's frontman mixes weirdo-disco and Americana on this Trump-baiting new single from his album 'Eternally Even', which tackles politics in the US.

BEST FOR FEELING FILTHY

HMLTD

Is This What You Wanted?

As grubby as a night out in Brixton with Fat White Family, you'll need a wash after listening to HMLTD's grimy post-punk.

BEST FOR LOSING FAITH

ENTER SHIKARI

Hoodwinker

A one-off track from St Albans' most angry, 'Hoodwinker' is beautifully brutal, and is also, according to frontman Rou Reynolds: "Enter Shikari angrily calling out your God as an imposter".

BEST FOR COMING OUT ON TOP

PUSHA T

HGTV

It's only two minutes long, but Pusha's flow is unapologetic here as he disses rap's current also-rans.

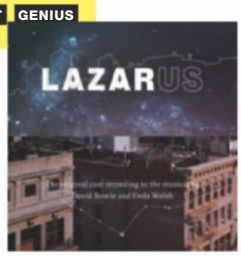
FOR MORE NEW MUSIC, GO TO NME.COM

PHOTO: TOM PULLEN

Life after death

An album of Bowie songs sung by the cast of the epic *Lazarus* musical, featuring three brand new songs written by the great man himself

LAZARUS CAST
Lazarus
★★★★☆
INVENTIVE MAGNIFICENT GENIUS



WE SHOULD BE eternally thankful that David Bowie was around to write and oversee his own tribute musical. Five years down the line we might've had Ben Elton hacking out the story of Ziggy Starman tackling a labyrinth full of diamond dogs to reach the Land Of The Serious Moonlight, complete with a chorus line of high-kicking Major Toms.

Instead, *Lazarus*, a sensitive and accomplished reworking of Bowie songs acting as a sequel to his role in Nicolas Roeg's film *The Man Who Fell To Earth*, opened in New York last December with Bowie's voice presciently present. *"Look up here, I'm in heaven"* begins the title track's operatic glam overture on this cast recording, delivered in *Dexter* star Michael C Hall's uncanny Bowie intonation, and Bowie's touch is constantly evident in the imaginative treatments of his canon.

Only a few tracks come down with showtune-itis – 'All The Young Dudes' and 'Changes', which morphs from a breathy, jazz-flecked ballad to an over-emotive Liza Minnelli cabaret piece in the hands of Cristin Milioti. Otherwise, invention reigns. 'This Is Not America' becomes a haunting siren call, 'The Man Who Sold The World' a minimalist frenzy of tech-noir skitterbeats.

'"Heroes"' and 'Life On Mars' are turned into languid piano delicacies, gorgeous but lacking much of the originals' power.

It's the three new Bowie tracks, the last songs he ever recorded, that give 'Lazarus' its titular sense of creative reincarnation, though. It's impossible to separate them from the circumstances of their writing – oceanic Radiohead-ish ballad 'No Plan', for instance, sounds like an anthem of deathbed fatalism, Bowie's warm and fragile voice facing a blank, empty future (*"This is no place, but here I am"*), while 'Killing A Little Time' finds him wailing, *"I've got a handful of songs to sing, to sting your soul, to f**k you over"*, over Nine Inch Nails tech-rock beats and murderous saxophones in his classic cockney arthouse quiver, simultaneously helpless and ferocious. Finally, the Ziggy-leaning 'When I Met You' is a discordant, fractured glam romance in which he declares to a lover, *"When I met you I was the walking dead",* while a robo-Bowie chatters unsettlingly in the background. Further signs that, right to the end, Bowie was testing himself with new tones and textures, raging magnificently against the dying of the light. **Mark Beaumont**

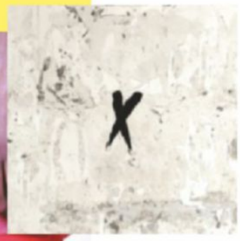
David Bowie in New York in 2013

PHOTO: JIMMY KING

A labour of love

Anderson .Paak's debut 'Malibu' set him up as the louchest loverman in hip hop. This follow-up is just as smooth and *almost* as good

NxWORRIES
Yes Lawd!
★★★★☆
R&B HIP HOP SEXY



ALBUM OF THE WEEK

BREEZY LOVEJOY. THAT was Anderson .Paak's first moniker as a musician. Probably for the best that he ditched it – dude sounded like a minor character from *Anchorman* – but it does hint at what a smooth operator he is. The 30-year-old Californian's sultry R&B and hip hop set, delivered as the sun was ebbing away, briefly turned this year's Reading Festival into something akin to Coachella. Well, OK, almost.

And no wonder: his 2016 debut 'Malibu' was unashamedly sexy, featuring one of last year's best singles in 'Heart Don't Stand A Chance'. It's funky as f**k with a confidently weird chorus that interrupts the flow, distilling all of .Paak's virtues into five glorious minutes.

This new album, then, sees him seek to capitalise on his reputation as the louchest loverman in hip hop right now.

'Yes Lawd!' is actually released under the name NxWorries (pronounced "no worries") and is a collaboration between .Paak and Philadelphia producer Knxwledge, who's best known for his jazzy, old-school sound and work on the track 'Momma' from Kendrick Lamar's 'To Pimp A Butterfly'. This latest record is a sprawling, languid affair, running to 19 tracks of soulful hip hop.

On 'Livvin', .Paak explains, "*I'm livin' / It ain't all about the money, you feel me? / But if it's out there, why don't you get it?*" Crooned as female backing vocalists sing in honeyed tones, this sets the freewheeling mood of the record. 'What More Can I Say' is a highlight, boasting a swooning violin sample and a classy horn section that gives the song a warm, '70s sound. Almost as slinky is 'Sidepiece', on which the narrator gallantly vows to dump his bit on the side to '*make room*' for The One.

So, yes, this is a very well-crafted album that succeeds on its own terms. Yet there's no 'Heart Don't Stand A Chance' here. There's no classic, stop-everything track to grab to you by the heartstrings.

Then again, 'Suede' (also featured on NxWorries' 2015 EP 'Link Up & Suede') comes close enough – which is closer than anyone else is likely to come before the year is up.

Jordan Bassett

(L-r:) Knxwledge and Anderson .Paak

PHOTO: ERIC COLEMAN

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Dr. Dre had never heard of Snapchat until Anderson .Paak introduced him to it.

(L-r:) Michael Campbell, Liam Fray, Daniel 'Conan' Moores

Hidden depths

On form, The Courteeners are more interesting than they're ever given credit for

THE COURTEENERS
Mapping The Rendezvous
★★★☆☆
INDIE-ROCK MANCHESTER

"No one will ever replace us," goes one of the more memorable choruses on The Courteeners' fifth album – and after eight years as Britain's "biggest underground band" it might even be true. For much of their career, The Courteeners have been scorned by critics, spurned by radio and derided as lad-rock knuckle-draggers who couldn't get arrested outside of Manchester. Yet they've kept releasing albums, filled ever-larger venues and swollen the ranks of devotees who hang on Liam Fray's every double entendre. To paraphrase that other famous Mancunian cult leader Morrissey: the more you ignore them, the bigger they get.

Given their 'band of the people' cachet, it's no surprise to find that 'Mapping the Rendezvous' largely preaches to the converted. Garage-psych opener 'Lucifer's Dreams' has a little light-hearted fun at the expense of the *"beautiful people"* of That London, while the aforementioned 'No One Will Ever Replace Us' is a swaggering torch song about falling in love at a festival. Elsewhere, the string-laden whimsy of 'De La Salle' finds Fray wondering, with a flourish of Morrisseyan absurdity, whether Joan of Arc, *"ever slipped and sliced her thumb chopping onions in double Home Economics".*

For the unbelievers, however, the problem with 'Mapping The Rendezvous' is the same one that's plagued them since their 2008 debut 'St. Jude' – namely, they've only made half of a very good album. For every track like 'Kitchen', with its sly funk-rock riffing on Ian Dury's 'Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll', there's the sledgehammer sentimentality of 'Most Important' or fag-packet balladry of the misleadingly titled 'Finest Hour'.

To put it bluntly, when Courteeners aren't writing songs to be bellowed back at them by a field of misty-eyed acolytes, they're a far better and more interesting band than they're given credit for.

Still, it's hard to imagine Liam Fray losing sleep over it. To the ears of their detractors, Courteeners will always sound unexceptional, but in the eyes of the faithful, 'Mapping the Rendezvous' will only make them more irreplaceable.

Barry Nicolson

STRANGE BUT TRUE

The album was partly inspired by 'Victoria', Sebastian Schipper's 2015 film about a night out in Berlin that culminates in a violent bank robbery, shot in a continuous take. "I've never had a night out go as badly as that," says Liam Fray, "but the look and feel of it was definitely a massive inspiration."

PHOTO: TOM OXLEY

Bryce Dallas Howard as Lacie in Nosedive

The future is now

The cast of Netflix's shiny new series of *Black Mirror* explain the frights that lie within four of its episodes

BLACK MIRROR
18 *Bryce Dallas Howard, Jerome Flynn, Malachi Kirby, Gugu Mbatha-Raw*
SCI-FI | DYSTOPIA | EXISTENTIALISM

THE LAST TWO SEASONS of *Black Mirror* have thrown up some weirdly believable scenarios, such as talent shows being used as social controls, or the UK's Prime Minister being forced to f**k a pig. Will season three be just as good at predicting the future? We asked some cast members.

WORDS: LARRY BARTLEET. PHOTOS: NETFLIX

EPISODE ONE
NOSEDIVE

The setting: An Insta-ready dystopia where characters rate each other out of five.
LESSON: Life is like an Uber journey.
Bryce Dallas Howard, who plays an anxious office worker, says: "My character wants to improve her rating. What's scary is that we're sort of existing in that world already: Uber drivers, for instance. I get rated as a passenger, I rate the driver. I asked an Uber driver what my rating was. It was 4.8. I was devastated: What's the .2 that's been docked off? We're being judged constantly."

EPISODE THREE
SHUT UP AND DANCE

The setting: A thriller in which two cyber-blackmailed strangers are forced to work together.
LESSON: The secrets on your mobile could ruin your life.
Jerome Flynn, who plays a shifty victim of blackmail, says: "The two main characters get caught up in something – it's terrifying and easy to relate to the way they're hoodwinked because it could happen now. The technology is there: a couple of leaps and this could be me. These two guys are going to be judged quite strongly and yet they're pretty human, really."

EPISODE FOUR
SAN JUNIPERO

The setting: A neon-splashed surreal romance set in 1987.
LESSON: Living in denial is easy.
Gugu Mbatha-Raw, who plays a tourist in a town where everything is not as it seems, says: "Unlike some *Black Mirror* episodes that have a very chilling technological element to them, *San Junipero* offers a positive alternative to where life could take you. I think everyone is going to have their own opinion of it – I think it's a positive and uplifting idea, but some people might find it disturbing."

EPISODE FIVE
MEN AGAINST FIRE

The setting: A military tragedy set in a futuristic world overrun by 'roaches'.
LESSON: Soldiers can be easily manipulated.
Malachi Kirby, whose by-the-book soldier Stripe falls prey to doubt, says: "Stripe's fighting the 'roaches', which are disgusting. They're weirdly human, but there's something terrifying about them. The scary thing is when Stripe realises that the world he's been living in is not what it seems. He ends up quite alone, with no one to trust."

Broken Britain

Righteous commentary on the state of the UK, which hits home with the force of a sledgehammer

I, DANIEL BLAKE
15 *Dave Johns, Hayley Squires*
★★★★☆
SOCIAL COMMENTARY GRIT

IT WOULD BE HARD TO imagine a film that's more of-the-moment than Ken Loach's latest. It follows the life of Daniel, a middle-aged widower living in Newcastle. After a heart attack, Daniel is told by his doctor that he shouldn't go back to work until his condition has improved. The government has other ideas.

On the basis of a couple of phone calls and a questionnaire, Daniel is judged fit to work and his benefits are stopped. Medically unable to work and financially unable to survive, he's trapped by circumstances.

Also struggling is Katie, a single mother who's trying to make a life for her two kids. Both want to work, but neither knows how to in a system that assumes the worst of them.

As a piece of writing, it has some very rough edges. Daniel and Katie are presented as saints of the benefit system, both desperate to get off it as soon as possible and both delivering monologues about their plans to do so that never quite sound like the words of real people.

Yet its inelegance doesn't particularly damage its effectiveness as a film. It seems clear that Loach doesn't want Daniel and Katie to stand as anything other than a relatable face for all the real people who tend to be anonymised into headlines or statistics. In that sense, it's extremely effective. Watching Katie breaking open a tin of beans in a food bank, shaking and weeping because she hasn't eaten properly in weeks, it's horribly easy to be reminded that the same thing is probably happening all across the country.

Loach isn't refining his filmmaking here – with 30 films over nearly 50 years, he has no reason to – but he's shouting about something he feels is wrong. He throws the arguments at you, showing you the country he thinks Britain has become and asking you to draw your own conclusions. It has all the subtlety of a sledgehammer, but it hits with the same force. **Olly Richards**

FOR FANS OF

PHOTOS: EONE FILMS

Dave Johns plays the eponymous hero in *I, Daniel Blake*

All dolled up

A film adaptation of some small dolls that stars Justin Timberlake, but is uninspired

TROLLS
U *Anna Kendrick, Justin Timberlake, Christine Baranski*

★★★☆☆

DISAPPOINTING DOLLS

TROLL DOLLS WITH JEDWARD hair and the gormless stare of Bez from Happy Mondays have managed to be an on-off fad for over five decades. One might wonder why they haven't been handed a film before. The reason is probably because there's not much to adapt. No defined characters, no established origin story. They're a name and little else. As sweet and likeable as their film is, it's a shame its makers didn't seize the opportunity this blank slate offered with more enthusiasm.

What the filmmakers Mike Mitchell (*Shrek Forever After, The SpongeBob Movie*) and Walt Dohrn have made is a film that steps tentatively where there's no need to. The trolls, who just love to sing and hug, live in fear of being eaten by much larger and less primary coloured monsters called the Bergens. The Bergens believe the only way to know happiness is to eat a troll. It's not totally obvious why. When a small clutch of trolls are kidnapped and destined for the pot, the trolls' leader Princess Poppy (Kendrick) and moody boy troll Branch (Timberlake) set off to get them back, growing closer as they go.

It's gently amusing and probably a good way to keep a child quiet for the best part of 90 minutes. Every time it looks like taking a weird risk, though, it pulls back. There's one original song, 'Get Back Up Again', which shows some wit, but then it falls back on well-known hits – 'The Sound Of Silence', 'True Colours' – which don't do anything for the story. It's just doll karaoke. There's a weird interlude with a stoner-type Cloud Guy, but he's a few, fun strange minutes, then gone.

There's nothing to really dislike here; it's too chirpy and enthusiastic for that. There's just a disappointing lack of effort to do more than is expected of it. **Olly Richards**

Princess Poppy the troll, voiced by Anna Kendrick

PHOTOS: DREAMWORKS, REX FEATURES

FOR FANS OF

SHREK

ICE AGE

Under The Radar

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST

PHOTOS BY ZOE MCCONNELL / STYLED BY TOPMAN

Jay Prince

Hip-hop-loving Londoner striving for "something that hasn't been done"

"Were any munchkins harmed during the making of my music?" Jay Prince laughs. "I hope not. If they were, I'm sorry." Munchkin Rights activists back down and fans of acid-fried sunshine rap rejoice; east London's Jay Prince is here to slaver the boundary-pushing experimental sounds and attitudes of Kanye and Kendrick over the classic heat-haze vibes of OutKast and De La Soul, and provide the summer cocktail soundtrack to global warming.

"As an artist you should always push yourself to do something that hasn't been done before," Prince says of his unique new strain of 21st Century hip-hop. Emerging last year with two EPs – 'BeFor Our Time' and 'Beautiful Mercy' – the 21-year-old rapper racked up over four million streams and bagged support slots with Major Lazer, Ghostface Killah and Jess Glynne. His new mixtape, provisionally entitled 'Smile Good', promises to add a fresh level of musicianship to an oeuvre that already involves freakoid acid jazz ('Freedom') and a stirring sample of Yoko Ono ('Yoko'). "I was watching an interview with Yoko Ono and she was talking about music being more than the people, it's a whole other life form," Prince explains. "Her perception was interesting. You have to understand that music is so much bigger than us – it's its own entity. If there was a planet called Music, there'd be so much to discover on that planet." **Mark Beaumont**

Jay Prince will headline NME Presents: Future Sounds of London at Boxpark Croydon on October 30. Sign up at nme.com/tickets for a chance to secure a free pair of tickets

GROOMING: JOHANNA DALEMO USING MAC COSMETICS

Jay Prince wears: Jacket, £65, top, £30, joggers, £40, all Topman AAA. Shoes, £48, Topman

Jay Prince wears: Shirt, £25, T-shirt, £25, jeans, £50, all Topman. Shoes, £45, Puma. Bandana, £20, Dreamclub. Watch: Jay Prince's own

Opposite: T-shirt, £30, jeans, £38, shoes, £48, all Topman. Sunglasses, £230, Linda Farrow x Dries Van Noten. Watch: Jay Prince's own

LIKE THIS? TRY THIS!

THE PHARCYDE
Bizarre Ride II The Pharcyde **(1992)**
A slinky, jazzy relief to the gangsta rap of the early ’90s, this shares Prince’s narcotic and inventive summertime feel.

YOUNG FATHERS
White Men Are Black Men Too **(2015)**
Conscious, innovative, modern British hip-hop for those who appreciate Prince’s sonic swerves.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Jay Prince started his career playing keyboards in his church band. He says, “Playing for my church, you’re in an environment where people wanna feel uplifted and feel good about themselves, consciously and spiritually, so subconsciously I’ve always wanted to make music that’s uplifting for someone’s spirit.”

Best track

‘AFROPHUNK’
Twinkly ’70s soul keyboards and peace-and-love summertime vibes accompany an entreaty to stand up against domestic violence and knife crime. “I was trying to uplift while talking about the darkest things,” he says.

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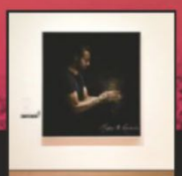

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live

THE MOST IMPORTANT GIGS THIS WEEK

KoL frontman Caleb Followill gives it some

The boys are back in town

Kings Of Leon are set to play in Leeds, Birmingham, Newcastle, Liverpool and Glasgow

KINGS OF LEON HAVE ANNOUNCED FIVE HUGE UK arena dates for February 2017, in Leeds, Birmingham, Newcastle, Liverpool and Glasgow. It follows the release of the Tennessee band's highly decent seventh album 'WALLS'. Speaking to *NME* last month, bassist Jared Followill explained how much the band enjoy playing arenas. "Every time you go up onstage and it's a big, good crowd, it feels probably better than you can imagine," he said. "It's kind of like a high. It releases chemicals into your body that you don't get from other things."

And he's keen on the band playing stadiums sometime soon. "I went and watched The Rolling Stones and One Direction in a big football stadium – not on the same night – and I was like: 'That'd be cool.' It was different, obviously – One Direction could've been singing anything – you couldn't hear anything, it was just girls screaming. Rolling Stones, they walked out and it was like a f**kin' rock 'n' roll show." Watch this space…

ON SALE NOW

KINGS OF LEON
Rock royalty, innit?

FEBRUARY
Sun 19 First Direct Arena, Leeds **Mon 20** Genting Arena, Birmingham **Fri 24** Metro Radio Arena, Newcastle **Sat 25** Echo Arena, Liverpool **Mon 27** SSE Hydro, Glasgow

WHO'S SUPPORTING?
No details yet.
TICKETS: Price TBC.
On sale now

PHOTO: AP/PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

ON SALE NOW

ELBOW

2008's Mercury Prize winners, fronted by Guy Garvey, who also DJs for BBC Radio 6 Music

MARCH

Wed 1 & Thu 2 O2 Academy, Birmingham **Sat 4, Sun 5 & Mon 6** Eventim Apollo, London **Wed 8** BIC, Bournemouth **Thu 9** Pavilions, Plymouth **Fri 10** Centre, Newport **Sun 12 & Mon 13** Usher Hall, Edinburgh **Tue 14** Spa, Bridlington **Wed 15** Dome, Doncaster **Thu 16** De Montfort Hall, Leicester **Sat 18, Sun 19 & Mon 20** O2 Apollo, Manchester

TELL ME MORE: This tour is in support of their seventh album, due out February 3 – expect rousing choruses and big-hearted lyrics.
WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.
TICKETS: £36.25-£41.40

LAURA MVULA

Twice Mercury-nominated Birmingham artist with a huge voice

NOVEMBER

Mon 14 Sage, Gateshead **Tue 15** Old Fruitmarket, Glasgow **Wed 16** Albert Hall, Manchester **Thu 17** Rock City, Nottingham **Sat 19** O2 Institute, Birmingham **Sun 20** De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea **Tue 22** Electric Brixton, London **Thu 24** Corn Exchange, Cambridge **Fri 25** Leadmill, Sheffield **Sat 26** O2 Academy, Bristol

TELL ME MORE: She's mainly playing the complex, billowing new material from 'The Dreaming Room'.
WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.
TICKETS: £19.50-£23.65

DAVID BRENT

Lovably awful comedy character created by Ricky Gervais

DECEMBER
Thu 15 BIC, Bournemouth
Fri 16 Centre, Brighton

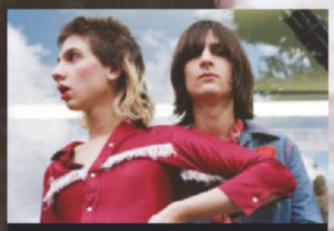
TELL ME MORE: The fictional Brent was the subject of a film *Life On The Road* earlier this year, and now Ricky Gervais is taking him on tour. "For Brent, it's a vanity project," he explains, "But it's really bad – he's a man at his lowest ebb." Sounds hilarious.
WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.
TICKETS: £35.95

SURVIVE

***Stranger Things* soundtrackers from Texas**

FEBRUARY
Sun 19 The Fleece, Bristol **Tue 21** The Deaf Institute, Manchester **Wed 22** Village Underground, London

TELL ME MORE: Only two of the members were involved in the sci-fi series' soundtrack, but their new album 'RR7349' proves they're as atmospheric and synthy as a four-piece.
WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.
TICKETS: £14.85-£18.15



THE LEMON TWIGS

Teenage, glam-styled purveyors of baroque-pop

NOVEMBER
Mon 28 & Tue 29 Moth Club, London **Wed 30** Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
DECEMBER
Thu 1 Brudenell Social Club, Leeds **Sun 4** Nice N' Sleazy, Glasgow **Mon 5** The Deaf Institute, Manchester

TELL ME MORE: These guys are leading a glam resurgence. Their multi-instrumentalism is impressive and their debut album 'Do Hollywood' is bloody brilliant.
WHO'S SUPPORTING: No details yet.
TICKETS: £7.70-£11.40

live

THE WEEK'S BEST GIGS

LADY LESHURR

AKALA
Fri 21 The Social, Southampton
Sat 22 Watering Hole, Perranporth
Mon 24 Waterfront, Norwich
Tue 25 Forest Tavern, Nottingham
Wed 26 2 FunkyMusic Café, Leicester
Thu 27 Kiln Farm Club, Milton Keynes

BOXED IN
Sat 22 Boiler Shop, Newcastle
Thu 27 Headrow House, Leeds

CABBAGE
Fri 21 The Social Bar, Doncaster
Sat 22 The Ferret, Preston
Thu 27 Sixty Million Postcards, Bournemouth

CLEAN BANDIT
Fri 21 Gorilla, Manchester
Sat 22 Waterfront, Norwich
Mon 24 The Roundhouse, London

CRAIG DAVID
Fri 21 Academy, Manchester

DAUGHTER
Sun 23 O2 Academy, Glasgow
Mon 24 Academy, Manchester
Tue 25 Colston Hall, Bristol
Thu 27 O2 Academy, Brixton

GIGGS

DINOSAUR JR
Wed 26 University Union, Leeds
Thu 27 Arts Club, Liverpool

DIZZEE RASCAL
Sat 22 Copper Box Arena, London

DMA'S
Fri 21 La Belle Angele, Edinburgh
Sat 22 SWG3, Glasgow
Mon 24 Electric Ballroom, London
Wed 26 O2 Institute, Birmingham
Thu 27 The Wedgewood Rooms, Portsmouth

GIGGS
Fri 21 O2 Academy, Newcastle
Thu 27 The Garage, Leeds

GLASS ANIMALS
Fri 21 O2 Academy, Oxford
Sat 22 Dome, Brighton
Tue 25 Roundhouse, London
Wed 26 Academy, Manchester
Thu 27 The Art School, Glasgow

GOAT
Fri 21 The ABC, Glasgow
Sat 22 Albert Hall, Manchester

HONNE
Sun 23 Trinity, Bristol
Tue 25 King Tut's, Glasgow
Wed 26 Gorilla, Manchester
Thu 27 Brudenell Social Club, Leeds

HOOTON TENNIS CLUB
Wed 26 The Wardrobe, Leeds
Thu 27 Waterfront, Norwich

JAGWAR MA
Fri 21 Academy, Manchester
Sun 23 Motion & The Marble Factory, Bristol
Tue 25 Brudenell Social Club, Leeds
Wed 26 Electric Ballroom, London

JAMIE T
Fri 21 O2 Academy, Sheffield
Sat 22 Corn Exchange, Cambridge

LADY LESHURR
Sat 22 O2 Academy, Liverpool
Sun 23 O2 Academy, Newcastle
Mon 24 The ABC, Glasgow
Thu 27 O2 Institute, Birmingham

MEILYR JONES
Sat 22 Library, Kendal

MICHAEL KIWANUKA
Fri 21 O2 Institute, Birmingham
Sat 22 O2 Ritz, Manchester

MØ
Sat 22 Roundhouse, London

NAO
Tue 25 O2 Ritz, Manchester
Wed 26 The Art School, Glasgow
Thu 27 University Union, Leeds

POLIÇA
Fri 21 O2 Ritz, Manchester
Sun 23 Concorde 2, Brighton

PORCHES
Fri 21 The Hug & Pint, Glasgow
Mon 24 The Dome, London

SLEAFORD MODS
Fri 21 Mandela Hall, Belfast
Mon 24 O2 Academy, Newcastle
Wed 26 LMUSU, Leeds
Thu 27 Academy, Manchester

SLEIGH BELLS
Thu 27 The Dome, London

SPRING KING
Sat 22 Rescue Rooms, Nottingham
Sun 23 O2 Academy, Oxford
Tue 25 Wedgewood Rooms, Portsmouth
Wed 26 Thekla, Bristol
Thu 27 Concorde 2, Brighton

THE VEILS
Tue 25 KOKO, London

WARPAINT
Sun 23 Queen's Hall, Edinburgh
Mon 24 Albert Hall, Manchester
Wed 26 Dome, Liverpool
Thu 27 Roundhouse, London

YAK
Fri 21 Broadcast, Glasgow
Sat 22 Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
Mon 24 Bar Abbey, Sheffield
Wed 26 O2 Academy, Liverpool
Thu 27 Scala, London

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Fri 21 KOKO, London

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WORDS: LARRY BARTLEET. PHOTOS: ALEX KACH, AUTUMN DE WILDE, GETTY IMAGES, SOMERSET HOUSE, REX

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SAT 12 LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY2
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SAT 19 SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY2
FRI 25 LONDON O2 ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON
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OL' DIRTY BASTARD

Got Your Money

"It never fails. It's one of those songs that's played just enough, but not so much that you get sick of it. To be honest, I don't have a lot of moves – I tend to do that move at the end of the night where it's a lot of hands on hips and lazy posing, but mostly I'm just slumping to one side because I'm really tired."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL

JAMES TAYLOR

Fire And Rain

"I want people to be so sad, I want them screaming with grief. It might not move some of the young people – because I totally intend to have teenagers at my funeral – but that song makes me so sad. It's one of those songs you've heard your whole life and one day you listen to the lyrics and just weep."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO

BLINK-182

What's My Age Again?

"Actually, any of those early Blink-182 hits. It's not for any emotional reasons – they were just so big and everyone made such an effort to be really into them and so did I. They got so played out. My older brother got me into better music – he got me into Sublime and Nirvana."

THE FIRST ALBUM I BOUGHT

JANET JACKSON

Janet

"I'd heard that Janet Jackson had done this album where she had posed with a guy just covering her breasts with his hands. I bought it because a friend told me it was really scandalous. I pretended that I really liked the music so I could see what it looked like when a guy was holding a girl's breasts. What a little perv!"

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING

CHRIS DE BURGH

The Lady In Red

"My mother claims that I first started singing along to 'The Lady In Red' on the radio, but I loathe that song! It drives me absolutely crazy. I like to imagine that she's lying."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH

SIMON AND GARFUNKEL

At The Zoo

"That was a silly one of their songs that I loved. My parents would listen to the same records over and over again. Simon And Garfunkel and The Beatles and my dad loved The Mamas And The Papas. He loved Mama Cass and really didn't have time for thin, pretty girls who couldn't sing. It was important for me to know that women who were talented or worked hard were more valuable than women who were just pretty."

THE ARTIST I LISTEN TO ON SET

ETTA JAMES

"On my first movie I had this rental car and it had one of those CD players in the trunk, so you couldn't change it, and I had this Etta James CD on repeat. Now her music gets me psyched-up and focused. It's like sense memory."

ETTA JAMES

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE

PAT BENATAR

Hit Me With Your Best Shot

"Even though I don't really know the words, 'Hit Me With Your Best Shot' always works. People get into the chorus and everybody sings along."

***Trolls* is in cinemas from today**

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LAST WORD

The wisdom of the *NME* archives

THIS WEEK

CALEB FOLLOWILL

Kings Of Leon

October 21, 2004

"We're not the same people we were 18 months ago. We're a whole lot richer, dude. Like literally hundreds of dollars richer."

INTERVIEW: LEONIE COOPER. PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

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